



ALEXANDRA PARK AND PALACE JOINT MEETING OF THE STATUTORY ADVISORY AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

15 MARCH 2021

Report Title: CEO's Report

Report of: Louise Stewart, Chief Executive Officer

Purpose: This report updates the committees on current issues and projects at Alexandra Park and Palace. It also provides additional information on the events programme and a range of activities of the Charitable Trust.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985: N/A

1. Recommendation

To note the content of this report.

2. Covid update – Palace and Road Closures

2.1 Building Closed

The Palace was closed to the public again on 16 December, due to changes in Covid-19 regulations and restrictions and remains largely closed with limited staff onsite. The change from Tier 4 restrictions in place at the end of 2020 to the stricter Lockdown announced at the start of January 2021 did not have a significant additional impact on the organisation. However, we are regularly revising our on-site working practices and supporting staff who have been at home for 10 months.

2.2 Road Closure

2.2.1 The Board and Advisory and Consultative Committees were provided with advance warning by email of plans to close Alexandra Palace Way on New Year's Eve, as in previous years. We also notified stakeholders that the road may be closed overnight at short notice if high levels of antisocial behaviour were experienced, as we had done during the summer and early November.

2.2.2 Following a rise in antisocial behaviour including crowds gathering and failing to observe social distancing, dangerous driving and illegal and dangerous parking the road was closed overnight from Friday 18 December to Sunday 20 December (reopening at 0500hrs on Monday 21 December) with access given to the W3 bus and emergency vehicles during these hours.

2.3 New Year's Eve

2.3.1 As in previous years, Alexandra Palace Way was closed from 2100 hrs on 31 December until 0200hrs on New Year's Day to all vehicles except buses, emergency vehicles and blue badge holders to prevent antisocial behaviour and potential disturbance. We communicated the closure in advance through our social media channels and notices on the road and in the car parks.

2.3.2 The Park was busy on New Year's Eve with many incidents of paper lanterns, fireworks and crowds of youths gathering. Our estate guarding team received 2 calls in relation to fireworks being set off and one call about crowds gathering. However, with the road closure and support of the Police the evening was largely incident free.

2.4 Antisocial behaviour

We continue to work with the local police and local authority teams to manage antisocial behaviour onsite. If local residents and park users witness illegal or anti-social behaviour, we remind them to call 101 or in an emergency 999 as well as the local authority's dedicated ASB Team (**Tel** 020 8489 1335).

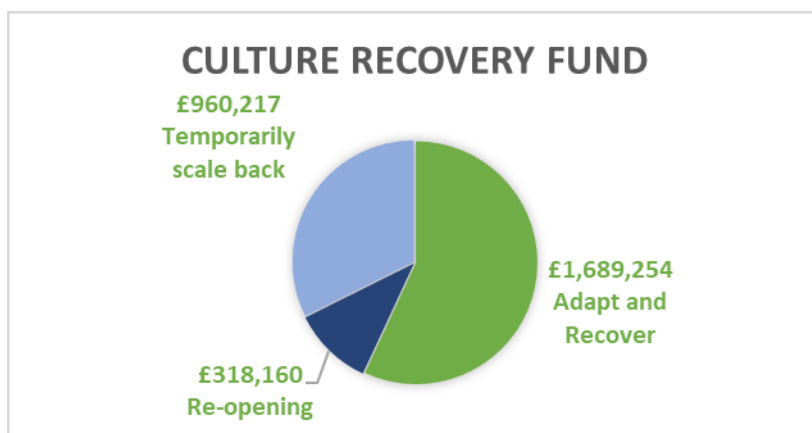
2.5 Visitor Service

Our Visitor Services Team continues to operate Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm and can be contacted on 020 8365 2121. Outside of these hours we can be contacted through the 'Contact Us' form on our website: <https://www.alexandrapalace.com/contact/get-in-touch/>.

2.6 Culture Recovery Fund

2.6.1 The Trust was successful in its application for the Culture Recovery Fund and the award of £2.9m was announced by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England and Department for Culture, Media and Sport in December 2020.

2.6.2 The fund is crucial in the Charity's recovery and fits into the grant scheme's criteria as follows:



- 2.6.3 Adapt and recover – includes salary costs, utilities and investment to improve and automate processes and systems to make us more efficient.
- 2.6.4 Temporarily scale back – will be spent mostly on park maintenance, ongoing building repairs and site security.
- 2.6.5 Re-opening - additional cleaning costs, COVID-secure measures and support to help us diversify income.

3. Car Park Charging Implementation

- 3.1 Following the Board's approval in September to implement a car park charging scheme we provided an update report at the last meeting, which can be viewed at the link below.
<https://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/documents/s120196/9.%20Car%20Park%20Charging%20V2.pdf>
- 3.2 We are progressing with the project and expect that there will be a slight delay to implementation, which is now scheduled to be the end of June 2021. However the donate to park scheme will remain in place until then.

4. Repairs & Maintenance - Glazing and Roof Repairs

- 4.1 The 1980's Georgian wired panes in the East and Palm Courts have been leaking for many years. The situation has been monitored through routine inspections, repairs and planned maintenance work. However, following accelerated dereliction due to variable weather conditions and severe weather events, the condition of the roof has deteriorated. Following additional inspections the programme for roofing and glazing repairs has been brought forward as urgent.
- 4.2 Therefore, repairs to Palm Court started to take place in January and will resume in April on the dome and other external areas. The East Court roof repairs will take place on 31 March and resume in May.
- 4.3 The Great Hall external spaceframes have not been redecorated since installation in the late 1980's and are badly degraded. This work will be conducted during April and, in May, renewal of defective glazing and areas of persistent leaks and a full external service will take place. This work has been scheduled to happen several times but other more critical and urgent works have previously needed to take priority.
- 4.4 The works will require a significant financial investment. We are redirecting resources from other priorities. However, these repairs need to be undertaken before we reopen so that we are able to operate and recover from the pandemic and earn income to fund future works.

5. Park

- 5.1 Visitor numbers spiked during the first lockdown and we reached our usual annual visitor number of 3m visits by mid-July. However, whilst the public benefit of the park increased, so did the litter, with a total of 186 tonnes collected from the Park in 2020.
- 5.2 The impact on our heritage site and the experience for visitors was devastating. However well over 100 local people rallied to help, possibly double that. Volunteers organised themselves in family groups, neighbourhood street groups, groups of friends, some on their own schedule, some as part of sessions quickly arranged to coordinate efforts in a covid secure way, by the Friends of the Park.
- 5.3 The efforts of the volunteers were critical in supporting the Park team, keeping the parkland safe and clean for everyone to enjoy, because of their dedication, frequency, regularity and in particular the months long duration of their efforts. Without them there would have been a huge backlog of waste. In January we nominated the litter volunteers for a Heritage Heroes Award (Heritage Alliance) because we are so grateful for their efforts in helping us this year to take care of the park and feel their efforts are worthy of greater recognition. If the nomination is successful we will know at the end of March.

7. Creative Learning

- 7.1 The Creative Learning Team has produced 43 downloadable activity support packs to support various groups (teachers, schools, families using the park, residential care home) and has produced 25 films, some step by step guides to learning new films, some setting challenges and advocacy films.
- 7.2 Weekly workshops continue over Zoom (primarily concentrated at either end of the age spectrum - young people and older people). Seven youth panels have been held as well as some face to face and dial-in workshops with young people excluded from school.
- 7.3 Volunteers continue to work across the site with 10 working on the archives, inputting data into the digital collection system and other administrative support. Weekly newsletters update the volunteers on Creative Learning and the wider organisation activities but it also provides information about opportunities and support in the locality. This year the volunteers have received 40 newsletters, 10 Zoom briefings and 3 social events.
- 7.4 25 days of outdoor (socially distanced) summer camps were held including street art, sustainable fashion, street dance and spoken word techniques in an outdoor environment.
- 7.5 The schools programme was the hardest hit during 2020 but the Team still reached 7,000 children with Biblio Buzz project and the Big Schools programme. Biblio Buzz 2021 has recently launched but had to be pushed back to June for various reasons that have now been resolved.
- 7.6 The Big Schools Para Dance set design & choreography programme for young people with special education needs was initially planned to enable the young people to showcase their dance work in the Theatre but was moved online as a gala event with advocacy from dance artists.

- 7.7 The Young People's Programme, Culture Bubble, was launched online, its core purpose was to create a channel for young people to have a voice through APP and to create programme but to also encourage leadership careers in the sector. The first task for the Young People's Panel was to create a manifesto and regular panels are hosted: <https://www.alexandrapalace.com/whats-on/culture-bubble-youth-voice/> . The Team is also working with Haringey libraries and Arts Council England to broaden the project across the borough to engage young people in programming culture in their locality.
- 7.8 Residential homes were also hit hard by the lockdown with reduced visits and residents being isolated for weeks. The Team started creating monthly resource packs for engagement officers in care homes to use with the residents and created Little Windows Therapies where visual performers create bespoke acts that create a dialogue with the residents and the outside world, through the windows. The sessions took place for one month before Christmas and will resume this year.
- 7.9 Prior to the lockdown Rhythm Stick used the Theatre as a safe space for a club-night at least 3 times a year. 15 young people (NEETS – Not in Education, Employment or Training) through a training programme about how to organise an event. A similar programme with adults with learning disabilities has just been completed to create an advocacy video for Rhythm Stick and it is hoped an event can take place in March.
- 7.10 Through funding from the BBC Children in Need the Team has been able to target Young Carers with a programme for respite opportunities and activities for their families to come together through the spirit of play. The project initially planned workshops and activities in the Creativity Pavilion and Ice Rink but was replaced with activity hampers and a Deliveroo voucher being sent to families and opportunities to join online performance and social events.

8. Fundraising

Two crowdfunding projects are currently live through the Spacehive website:

8.1 Artists walk

The Creative Learning Team aim to create spaces for Haringey artists to showcase their work in an Art Trail. A map will be available through the Alexandra Palace website to guide visitors around the works and link back to the artists involved. The project requires £5,314 and it runs until 11 May 2021.

More information is available at: <https://www.spacehive.com/alexandrapalace>

The 2020 Art Trail (displayed from windows of the Palace) was extended during the third lockdown to provide animation for people taking daily exercise in the Park. Most of the work is likely to be taken down at the end of March or early in April and may be replaced by a photography exhibition created via the young people's programme. The Team hope to continue to partner with the Art Trail team on an annual basis and create opportunities for the young people programming team to commission work.

8.2 Ice Rink Plexiglas Screen

The team have launched a campaign to fund the installation of a Plexiglas screen around the Ice Rink to provide a safer and covid-secure ice hockey environment. At the time of writing this report £15,455 has been pledged and there is an opportunity to secure match funding to reach the £94,459 target.

To support, please visit <https://www.spacehive.com/ally-pally-ice-hockey-screen>

9. Other Activity

9.1 One session of the PDC Darts Championship was held with an audience, before tighter restrictions were imposed and the remainder of the competition took place behind closed doors.

9.2 We have been lighting the Mast in support of various organisations over the year. Including:

4 July 2020	– 72 Years NHS celebration
10 Aug & 30 Sept 2020	– ‘Light it Red’ awareness of event venues that may not reopen
14 October 2020	– Green Flag Award support for parks and green spaces
7 December 2020	– Green for NSPCC Christmas Campaign
8 December 2020	– Yellow for Grief Awareness Week
4 & 11 February 2021	– Light it Blue for the NHS campaign
22 February 2021	– in red for World Encephalitis Day

All external requests to light the mast follow the same application process and are assessed for their appropriateness for the Trust to support. We are limited on the number of days a year we are able to light the mast and the times it can be lit.

10. Kaleidoscope 2021

Our in-house festival is programmed to return on Saturday 24 July 2021 and, at the time of writing this report, the organisation was still considering the possibility of the large event taking place.

11. Legal Implications

11.1 The Council’s Interim Head of Legal and Governance has been consulted on this report and has no comments.

12. Appendices

None